

# Lesson Plan: Utopic and dystopic visions: Differing views of social order English / Social Studies

## Lesson Plan

Title	Utopic and dystopic visions: Differing views of social order
Subject	English/Language Arts /Social Studies
Grade(s)	10-12
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5
Keywords	Utopia, dystopia, fascism, communism, workers' struggles, class warfare, Spanish Civil War
Essential questions	What is an ideal society (utopia)?
Synopsis	Students will listen to a video clip wherein an older gentleman explains the feeling of camaraderie and unity of purpose that he got from attending populist rallies as a young man. Then, students will be asked to read Orwell's excited impression of the worker's state of wartime Catalonia and Agustín de Foxá's criticism of leftist behavior in Madrid. They will then visually represent either Orwell or de Foxá's view.
Standard Alignment(s) used	Common core State Standards (literacy in history/social studies)
Recommended Teacher Background	The teacher may wish to amplify his or her background knowledge on the Spanish Civil War, beginning with the ALBA website: <a href="http://www.alba-valb.org/history/spanish-civil-war">http://www.alba-valb.org/history/spanish-civil-war</a> . He or she also may wish to watch all of <i>The Good Fight</i> .
Connection to other disciplines	This lesson offers connections to Social Studies, Art, Politics, Sociology, Philosophy, Spanish and English/Language Arts
Number of class periods	

## Standards

Objectives	Standards addressed
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7
Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5

## Primary Sources

- *The Good Fight*
- Orwell's "In the Caserne Lenin"
- Agustín de Foxá's "Madrid" (in translation)

## Assessment

### *Pre-Assessment, Activation of Prior Knowledge:*

Students will need to know the political alliances that led to the Spanish Civil War. They should have some knowledge of the political spectrum and the agitations provoked by far-right and far-left wing movements in the 1920's and 1930's. Since you already showing some of *The Good Fight* as a lead in, you may want to additionally show 3'38" through (at least 20'45" or) 22'48". This segment will show students more of the historical context, including events with which they will likely be somewhat familiar, the Great Depression, the growth of the Nazi Party and Isolationism, before introducing them to the Spanish situation at 13'50" and finally explaining the neutrality of other nations.

### *Lesson Activities:*

#### 1. Lead-In/Hook:

Show students the very brief Tom Page interview from *The Good Fight* (8'37" – 9'06"). Ask them how he felt and why? (wonderful – feelings of camaraderie at demonstrations) Also ask them what thing he mentions that might have angered other people? (besides gender and racial equality, the fact that he jumped the turnstile on the subway). Tell them that they will be reading two different views of life in Civil War Spain, one that would very much agree with Page, and one that would object to his views.

#### 2. Step by Step:

1. **George Orwell** – Have students read Orwell's "In the Caserne Lenin" from his *Homage to Catalonia*. Have them soak in this particularly descriptive passage and try to imagine the scene. It may be a good passage for students to read aloud, if there are some students who have the knack for it.
2. If you want there to be process measures, as well as the final product at the end, you may want to have students copy those quotes that particularly grab their imagination into a notebook or journal or e-journal and begin illustrating them.
3. **Agustín de Foxá** – Have students do the same procedure with Agustín de Foxá's "Madrid" from *Madrid: De corte a checa*.

### 3. Closure:

As a culminating activity, students will choose one of the visions presented (or they can be assigned) and have the students represent it visually, either through traditional art media, computer-assisted art media, or a skit complete with costumes and props. This may be a group project.

#### **Differentiation:**

As a variation of the previous structure, a teacher could divide the students into two groups early on and have half of the class read one of the works and the other class read the other half. Students could later return to read the other work after they have seen the representations done by the other half of the class. A teacher may even assign one reading to one section and another reading to another section and then have the students meet to exchange views, to see, quite literally, how the other side is viewing the situation.

#### **Post-Assessment:**

See Closure, above. Grading could follow the holistic rubric below:

- A – Excellent work Student work is faithful to the details of the text, not departing from it in any significant way. Created work is interesting and thoughtful and appears polished and well-designed.
- B – Good work Student work is mostly faithful to the details of the text, perhaps with minor oversights, omissions or misreadings. Created work is interesting, well-planned and carefully designed.
- C – Acceptable work Student work relates to the text, but only superficially. Work is of acceptable standards of quality and design, but remains only minimal in scope.
- D – Unacceptable work Student work exhibits a significant misreading or misunderstanding of the text, and/or only narrowly considers a portion of that text Work is below minimal standards of quality and design.
- F – Work is below the above descriptors or is inappropriate